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#### ABSTRACT

5 The present invention includes an axle guard system which prevents, or at least substantially inhibits, cable, rope, wire and other refuse and debris from wrapping around the axle of a compaction machine, behind a compactor wheel mounted on the axle, during the operation of the compaction machine in compacting refuse. The compaction machine is of the type used, for example, in landfills or transfer facilities to compact (i.e., increase the density of) the refuse disposed therein. The compactor wheel comprises a hub mountable to the compaction machine axle, a rim mounted around the outer circumference of the hub, a plurality of cleats mounted to the face of the rim, and the axle guard system. The axle guard system can comprise at least one circumferential barrier extending above the face and adjacent the inner circumferential edge of the rim and/or a cleat-free area extending widthwise from the inner circumferential edge of the rim and across the rim toward the outer circumferential edge of the rim.

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